# **Freestyle Rules**

### Object of the game:

• The object of the game is for the human and dog team to showcase their best "discdogging moves" highlighting their strengths in the four judged areas.



## **UpDog Freestyle Philosophy:**

• UpDog believes that the "game" of freestyle is the ultimate conglomeration of a human handler and their canine pal's skills. All of the other UpDog challenge games (4 way play, Frizgility, Spaced Out, etc.) help to build a foundation of skills and creativity that can translate to the game of freestyle.

### Overview of the game:

- The "complete" freestyle game" involves two freestyle rounds.
- The first round of freestyle is known as the criterion round and will be judged by three or four judges based upon a set criteria in four categories: human performance, dog performance, teamwork, and success. Specific criteria that judges will look for in each of these categories can be found in the rules below and in the judges' worksheets.
- The second round of freestyle is known as the performance round. A "celebrity" judge will be added to the judging lineup. This celebrity could be a local celeb, a member of another dog sport organization, a retired club member, someone's relative visiting the event, etc. Clubs should try to utilize someone from outside the discdog community if possible to bring more exposure to the sport and to add in the "layman's" opinion. We feel it is important for UpDog and its players to maintain a pulse on both what judges look for in a freestyle routine and also what the general public appreciates as entertaining in a freestyle routine.

### Levels:

• There are two levels of UpDog freestyle: Level 1 and Level 2. Level 1 is the beginners' level. Level 2 is the advanced level. Unlike most other UpDog games, a team may choose which level of freestyle they would like to enter. (Teams do not have to earn their way to Level 2 through achievements and UPs.) The general rules for each level are the same, although the judging criteria for the criterion round is more sophisticated and at a higher degree of difficulty at level 2.

### **Dog Divisions:**

- There are four divisions for <u>dogs</u> in UpDog freestyle based upon height: Mini, Midi, Maxi and Mega. These are the same divisions accounted for in UpDog agility crossover games. The divisions are defined as follows:
  - Mini Division: Under 15"
  - o Midi Division: 15"-18"
  - Maxi Division: Over 18" and under 23"
  - o Mega Division: 23" and over
- Depending upon the numbers of entries in each division, a club may decide to include all dogs within one division and provide placements (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>) for only 3 teams. If a club decides to offer more than one dog division at their event, but less than four, they will need to accommodate competitors with dogs at the missing level by allowing them to enter the level that most closely matches the height of their dog. For example: If a club offers the mini and the maxi divisions, but not the midi division, the club should allow a 16" dog to enter the maxi division.
- These dog divisions may be offered at Level 1 and/or Level 2 of freestyle

## **Human Divisions:**

- Clubs may decide to offer whatever human divisions they choose such as:
  - o Junior: Must be 15 years of age or younger
  - Open: Open to all ages.
  - Senior: Must be 50 years of age or older
- Human divisions may be offered at Level 1 and/or Level 2 of freestyle

## **Competency Divisions:**

• Clubs may decide to offer divisions based upon freestyle competency such as expert, intermediate, and novice divisions. Clubs may offer these divisions at either level (1 or 2).

### **Freestyle Options:**

- A club may offer any combination of freestyle levels and divisions they choose. The number of possible entries will most likely play a large role in deciding which levels and divisions a club will offer.
- Divisions allow for clubs to offer more placements/awards at 1<sup>st</sup>,2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>
- All achievements are open to teams regardless of the division they enter. (Achievements are specific to levels.)

#### **Rules:**

#### **Discs Allowed:**

- Competitors are allowed up to eight discs.
- Discs must be dog safe discs. For a list of dog safe disc approved by UpDog consult the updogchallenge.com site general rules document.
- Any size dog may use any size disc (as long as the safety of the dog is maintained).
- Competitors may mix discs of different sizes and types.
- Competitors may select different discs for different rounds (including the SweetSpot bonus round).

### **Time Allotment:**

- Time allotted for the criterion round in level 1 is 105 seconds. Teams performing at least 60 seconds of material will receive a score.
- Time allotted for the criterion round in level 2 is 135 seconds. Teams performing at least 90 seconds of material will receive a score.
- Time allotted for the performance round (round 2) in level 1 is 105 seconds. Teams performing at least 60 seconds of material for round 2 will receive a score.
- Time allotted for the performance round (round 2) in level 2 is 135 seconds. Teams performing at least 90 seconds of material for round 2 will receive a score.

#### Round 1: The Criterion Round Rules:

- Four judges are suggested for this round. At least one judge must be a certified UpDog Freestyle judge. See the UpDog website for details on becoming certified.
- A head judge should be appointed. The head judge must be a certified UpDog Freestyle judge.
- The head judge pairs each judge with one of the four criterion categories (human performance, dog performance, teamwork, and success). The least experienced judge should be paired with the success category. UpDog suggests that the human judge have at least two years of recent experience playing freestyle.
- See each of the three separate judges worksheets for details on the criteria for human performance, dog performance, and teamwork. Each category has been broken down into 6 subcategories. A judge may award up

to 5 points in each subcategory and may award half quarter point increments. The highest combined score possible for each of the three categories (Human, Dog, Team) is 30 points.

- If only three judges are available, a club may choose to utilize the three judge format. In this format, the team category is split between the human and dog judge. The teams will be judged on the same criteria as in the four judge format and will have the opportunity to earn the same amount of points. In the three judge format, the human and dog judge will each be evaluating three additional sub categories. It is required that both the human and dog judge be certified UpDog freestyle judges in order to utilize the three judge format.
- The success category is worth ten points. The success judge records the number of throws or rollers during a round and the number of catches. At the end of the round the judge should divide the number of catches by the number of throws/rollers. This will yield a decimal that the judge will multiply by 10 (move the decimal 1 place to the right) and round to the nearest half quarter point.

## For example:

If the handler threw 24 throws/rollers and the dog caught 20 of them, the judge would do the following calculation  $20 \div 24 = 0.83333...$  If you multiply the decimal by 10 (move the decimal 1 space to the right) the result is 8.33333.... The judge will round the value 8.333... to the nearest half quarter point which is 8.25. The team would receive an 8.25 as their success score.

- The total number of points that can be awarded during the criterion round is 100.
  - Human performance category = 30 points
  - Dog performance category = 30 points
  - Teamwork = 30 points
  - Success = 10 points
- Teams should view the 100 points more as a percentile score rather than a typical percentage score that they might receive on a school test out of 100.
  - 90 100 points is **not** an "A" and a score below 60 points does **not** denote a "failing" score.
- A team receiving 50 total points (or 15 possible points out of 30 for one category) should be considered an "average" freestyle team for that level. A team scoring between 90 100 points is performing at an extremely high level, fulfilling almost all of the criteria at a very high difficulty level. It is possible, however, that at an event such as the UpDog Challenge International finals (where many of the top teams in the world are performing) that many teams could score between 90-100 points.
- No props or dog costumes (other than a bandana) are allowed during the criterion round of freestyle.
- The time for the criterion round begins when the player signals to the announcer that they are ready for their music to begin. (Music and time begin together.)
- A player may decide to utilize a portion of their 135 seconds to conduct a "pre-routine" with their dog. <u>Judging</u> for the criterion round, however, does not begin until the first disc is thrown to the dog.

## **Performance Round**

- The performance round encourages teams to break out of a typical competitive routine and demonstrate their most creative, innovative, and entertaining disc dog moves. With this said, the above should be done with the safety of the dog in mind. During this round, handlers should feel free to engage and interact with the crowd for maximum entertainment value. The judges will be looking for outstanding tricks and moves, showmanship, and quality disc play with the safety of the human and K-9 as a priority.
- Five judges are needed for this round. At least one judge must be a certified UpDog Freestyle judge. See the UpDog website for details on becoming certified.

- If a club is utilizing the three judge format (as noted in the criterion section above), they will only utilize four judges for the performance round.
- The head judge from the criterion round will act as head judge during the performance round as well. The head judge must be a certified UpDog Freestyle judge.
- The fifth judge (did not judge during the criterion round) should be a local celeb, a member of another dog sport organization, a retired club member, someone's relative visiting the event, etc. Clubs should try to utilize someone from outside the discdog community, if possible, to bring more exposure to the sport and to add in the "layman's" opinion.
- Each judge will award the team a comprehensive score for the performance round, taking into account all elements they look for in a high level, entertaining freestyle routine.
- Judges will receive small slips of paper upon which to record their score for the team's performance round. 3 x 3 post it sized slips of paper work well.
- The comprehensive score awarded by each judge will be between 0 and 10 with quarter point increments allowed. Points should be deducted for moves and throws that place the dog at risk of injury. So that players are aware when points have been deducted for unsafe behavior, the judges will record the score the player would have gotten, the deductions, and then the judges will circle the final score. See examples.
- Because this is the "performance" round, judges are encouraged to award up to 8 points for the overall freestyle routine (see a suggested scoring guide below) and to "save" 2 points to award as bonus points (may use quarter point increments). The number of "performance bonus points" awarded should be based upon the "performance" aspect brought to the routine. Performance aspects could include: Human or dog costumes, props, music matching a routine's theme, special tricks, big tricks, unique and innovative moves, human
- athleticism, crowd appeal, humorous interludes, entertainment value, etc.

  The highest combined score each judge can award a team is a total of 10 points.
- Suggested 8 point scoring guide:
  - o 0-2 only brief flashes of freestyle skills are demonstrated throughout the routine
  - 2.25 5 "Average" freestyle skills are demonstrated, throughout most of the round with flashes of above average freestyle skills.
  - 5.25 7 "Average freestyle skills are demonstrated throughout most of the round with flashes of superior skills scattered throughout the round
  - o 7.25 8 "Superior freestyle skills were demonstrated throughout the entire freestyle round
- Judges should award those teams they feel have the best overall freestyle performance and are the most entertaining the highest scores. Judges may award the same score to multiple teams if they so choose.
- The performance round begins when the music begins and lasts 135 seconds. A team may decide to do some "pre-routine" flatwork or dog tricks. Judging begins when the music begins. If a disc is not thrown until 30 seconds into the round, that is fine, but judging begins when the music begins.
- "Costumes" are allowed during the performance round of freestyle as long as they are safe for the competitor and dog. If at any time during the round the judges deem that the costumes are unsafe, the judges will stop the round and the team will receive no score for the performance round.
- "Props" are allowed during the performance round, but must be off the field prior to a disc being thrown. For example: The music is started, competitor enters the field on a unicycle with their dog following. Prior to the first disc being thrown, the unicycle must be off the field.

- Following a routine, judges will receive 30 seconds to write a score on their slip of paper. The countdown track
  that is played for the performance round of freestyle will begin the judge's countdown immediately following
  "Time" being announced and ending the players' round.
- After the 30 seconds have expired, the judges will write the scores (comprehensive and performance bonus) for
  the performance round on their slip of paper, fold it inward so that the score is covered and no one can see. All
  five judges scores will be collected, shuffled around so that the person inputting scores does not know which
  score came from which judge, and the scores will be inputted into the competitors' spreadsheet.
  - The scores from the judges with the highest and the lowest total score (comprehensive and bonus combined) will be dropped. The spreadsheet will calculate the mean (average) of the remaining three total scores rounded to the nearest hundredth of a point. That score is then multiplied by 10. If using the "three judge format" you will only have 4 scores for the performance round. Follow the steps below to calculate the performance round score:
    - Average the 4 scores.
    - The average score is now your 5<sup>th</sup> score.
    - Enter all 5 scores into the normal freestyle score sheet.
    - The high and low score will be dropped.
    - The three middle scores will be averaged and multiplied by 10.
    - Highest score a team can receive will still be 100.
- The maximum number of points a team may earn during the performance round is 100
- The maximum number of combined points a team may earn after completing both rounds of freestyle and the SweetSpot Bonus Round is 202.
- During the 30 seconds while judges are scoring the performance round, if possible, the announcer will announce all 5 of the individual judges' comprehensive scores of the previous team for the audience to hear. (For example: "The performance round scores for Bryan Batchelder and Banshee are 9.0, 8.75, 9.5, 7, and 9.25)

**Tiebreaker:** In the event that two or more teams in the top three are tied, the teams will participate in a 15 second "trick off". Each team will have 15 seconds to showcase their best freestyle moves. The announcer will begin the round with "Ready, set, go". The announcer will announce "10 seconds" and "5,4,3,2,1,time". After each team has performed their 15 seconds worth of material, the judges will huddle up, converse with each other, and (based upon the 15 seconds of freestyle moves they just watched) decide who wins the tiebreaker.

## **Freestyle Achievements and Ups:**

There are two levels of freestyle: Level 1 and 2

Players may move up at any time. They do not have to level up to move to level 2

## **Criterion Round Achievments:**

Players may earn achievements in each of the three main categories: Human, Dog, and Team

Level 1 Excellent Human: Score between 18 and 23.75 points in the human category

Level 1 Excellent Dog: Score between 18 and 23.75 points in the dog category

Level 1 Excellent Team: Score between 18 and 23.75 points in the team category

Level 1 Superior Human: Score between 24 and 27.25 points in the human category

Level 1 Superior Dog: Score between 24 and 27.25 points in the dog category

Level 1 Superior Team: Score between 24 and 27.25 points in the team category

Level 1 Elite Human: Score 27.5 points or higher in the human category

Level 1 Elite Dog: Score 27.5 points or higher in the dog category

Level 1 Elite Team: Score 27.5 points or higher in the team category

Players earning 3 of the same achievement will earn the Up for that achievement

### Performance Round Achievements:

Level 1 Excellent Performance: Score between 70 and 79.75 points

Level 2 Superior Performance: Score between 80 and 89.75 points

Level 3 Elite Performance: Score between 90 and 100 points

At the same time as teams are working towards these achievements and ups, they are earning points towards their cumulative ups through the total points awarded in two rounds of freestyle and the double shot attempt.

## Cumulative Point Ups:

Bronze: 500 cumulative freestyle points

Silver: 1000 cumulative freestyle points

Gold: 1500 cumulative freestyle points

Titanium: 2000 cumulative freestyle points

Unobtanium: 2500 cumulative freestyle points